

# An Assessment on Awareness and Acceptability of Child Adoption in Edo State

P. Aluyor<sup>1\*</sup> L.I. Salami<sup>2</sup>

1. Department of Vocational & Technical Education, Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma

2. Department of Vocational & Technical Education, University of Benin, Benin City

## Abstract

The study examines the awareness and acceptability of child adoption in Edo State. The design used for the study was survey design. The population for the study is made up of adults male and female in Esan West Local Government Area. One hundred respondents were randomly selected using random sampling techniques. The validity was ascertained by experts Reliability was established using the split – half method. Coefficient reliability of 0.75 was obtained. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire with twenty items. The data was analyzed using simple percentages according to the research questions formulated. The results of this study revealed amongst others that there is awareness and acceptability of child adoption. But, Large percentage of respondents disagreed with the fact that adopted children should have equal right to properties as biological children. It was therefore recommended that pregnancies that are not planned for especially from teenagers should not be aborted, childless couples should be free to adopt child or children

**Keywords:** Child Adoption, family, childlessness, barren, marital, children

## 1. Introduction

In Adoption is the legal process whereby a person obtains judicial or administrative authorization to take the child of another person as his own and parental right and obligations are permanently transferred from child's natural parents to the adopter. It is the social emotional and legal process that creates a family for a child when the birth family is unable to parent. It is an acceptance into a parent's family of a child not born to the parent's, yet the child has the parent's name and the same legal rights as a child by birth (Issa and Awoyemi;, Chukwu, 2011).

One of the factors that necessitate the adoption of a child is being childless. Childlessness is a potential cause of marital instability especially in the African culture. Where it is used as a parameter for marital success. This is because a marriage without children is likely to be stressful for couples due to pressures from family members especially encouraging the husband to take up a second wife where the women is suspected to be barren (Oladokun, A. Arulogun, O; Oladokun, R; Morhason – Bello, I.O; Bamgboye E.A; Adewole, I.F. & Ojengbede, O.A. (2009))

Other purposes are to acquire a companion for an only child, to stabilize a marriage, To legitimate an illegitimate child. To relieve parents who are unable to take care of their child, to rescue a child who is in an preversible situation of abandonment (Chukwu, 2011).

The most obvious reason of adoption is great because it brings a child into this word, as opposed to be aborted. However as with all adoption procedures rules differ from state to state, adoptive parents must foster their children for at least three months in Lagos. In Akwa Ibom, the adoptive parent must foster their children for at least one year. Abuja allows adoption if and only if one parent is a Nigerian (Kigbu, 2002). Nigeria has the following eligibility requirements for prospective adoptive parents.

- (a) Age requirements: prospective adoptive parents must be at least 25 years of age and 21 years older than the child. For married couples at least one parent must meet the age requirements.
- (b) Residency requirements: Nigerian law requires the parent – child relationship be established before the court decision can be considered final.
- (c) Marriage requirements: Both single individuals and married couples may adopt. Note that a single person will not be allowed to adopt a child of the opposite sex except in extra ordinary circumstances.

Income requirements: Nigeria does not have any income requirements for inter country adoptions. (Adamee and Fierce, 2000; Adamec, 2004; Ezugwu 2002).

## 1.1 Child Adoption in Edo State

1. Establishment of adoption services: The state Government shall, for the purpose of adoption, establish within the state, a service designed to meet the needs of ;
  - (a) A child who has been or may be adopted
  - (b) Parents and guardians of the child who has been or may be adopted.
2. The facilities to be provided as part of the services maintained under subsection (1) include:
  - (a) Temporary boarding and lodging where needed by a child and, in exceptional circumstances, the mother of a child.

- (b) Arrangements for assessing a child and prospective adopters and placing of the child for adoption and Counseling for persons with problems relating to adoption (Edo state of Nigeria) Gazette, 2008.

A common problem is that terms of chosen by an identity group, as acceptable descriptors of themselves, can be then used in negative ways by detractors. This compromises the integrity of the language and turns what was intended to be positive into negative. Another common post adoption issue, telling children about their adoption, parents often have a harder time figuring out how to let their child know about the adoption that they do telling friends and relatives (Wikipedia 2011).

Another problem of child adoption is emotional or psychological problems especially when he's had an emotional outburst because adoption parent are punishing him for wrong doing, or when they are not allowed to do, what they think everybody else is allowed to do or what he requested for are not met by the adopted parent. They right use often some words," you're not my real mom, I hate you my real mom would never be as mean as you are" (Mix, 2008).

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Adoption is a legal process pursuant to state statute in which a child's legal rights and duties towards its natural parents are terminated and similar rights and duties towards his adoptive parents are substituted. It relieves parents who are unable to take care of their children. Adoption is great because it brings a child into this world, as opposed to being aborted. Yet there are different cases where children are being abandoned, babies abandoned in the dust-bin, there is a case where teenage mother drop new born babies in pit – toilets, but because the baby is destined to live, the baby was rescue by women around the environment, therefore, the researcher want to investigate the awareness and acceptability of child adoption in Edo State.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study therefore is to

- (i) Examine awareness and acceptability of child adoption
- (ii) Determine acceptability of child adoption having equal right to property as biological child.
- (iii) Examine if child adoption is a necessity especially for childless couples.

Determine if the resources spent on adopted child is wasted.

### 1.4 Research Question

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

- (i) Is there awareness and acceptability of child adoption?
  - (ii) Does adopted child has equal right to properties as that of biological child?
  - (iii) Does child adoption a necessity especially for childless couples?
- Does resources spent on adopted child a wasted resources?

## 2. Methodology

The design used for this study was survey design. The population for this study comprised of adults male and female in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State. One hundred (100) adults male and female were randomly selected in Esan West Local Government Area. A random sampling technique was used for this study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire with twenty items. It was validated by experts in education. Reliability was established using the split – half method coefficient reliability 0.75 was obtained. The questionnaires were distributed to selected adults male and female personally by the researcher and one research assistance. Ninety six were retrieved immediately after completion. The data obtained were analyzed using simple percentage.

## 3. Data Analysis and Results

Research questions 1: Is there awareness and acceptability of child adoption?

**Table 1:** Awareness and Acceptability of Child Adoption

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED	%	DISAGREED	%
1.	You have heard of child adoption	82	85	14	15
2.	You are favourably disposed to the idea of adopting a child	59	62	37	38
3.	You can recommend child adoption to someone	61	63	35	37
4.	The idea of child adoption is good	77	80	19	20
5.	You like families that adopted children	60	62	36	38

Data on table one shows that 82 (85%) have heard of child adoption while 14(15%) claimed that they have not heard of child adoption. Also 59(62%) indicated that they are favourably disposed to the idea of adopting a child while 37 (38%) claimed that they are not favourably disposed to the idea of adopting a child. Result also shows that 61(63%) can recommend child adoption to someone, while 35 (37%) indicated that they

cannot recommend child adoption to someone 77 (80%) indicated that the idea of child adoption is good 19 (20%) claimed that the idea of child adoption is not good. Also 60 (62%) indicated that they like families that adopted children while 36(38%) claimed that they do not like families that adopted children.

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED	%	DISAGREED	%
6.	Adopted children should be sent to school up to higher level	94	98	2	2
7.	Money spent on adopted children is wasted	21	21	75	79
8.	Adopted children should learn work rather than going to school	12	13	84	87
9.	Adopted children should have equal rights to properties as biological children	17	18	79	82
10.	Adopted children should inherit property as first born even when other children arrive	30	31	66	69

The data on table two shows that 94 (98%) adopted children should be sent to school up to higher level, rather than learning work. While 2(2%) claimed that adopted children should not be sent to school up to higher level. Also 21 (21%) indicated that money spent on adopted child is wasted while 75 (79%) claimed that money spent on adopted children is not wasted. The result also shows that 12 (13%) indicated that adopted children should learn work rather than going to school. Whereas 84 (87%) claimed that adopted children should go to school rather than learning work. 17(18%) agreed that adopted children should have equal rights to property as biological children .While 79 (82%) indicated that biological children should not have equal rights to property as biological children. Also 30 (31%) indicated that adopted children should inherit property as first born even when other children arrived. Whereas 66 (69%) claimed that adopted children should not inherit property as first born when other children arrive.

### Research Questions 3: Does Child Adoption a Necessity especially for Childless Couples?

Table 3: Necessity of Child Adoption for Childless Couples

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED	%	DISAGREED	%
11.	Adopted children can stabilized marriages	84	87	12	13
12.	Adopted children can actually behave like biological children	81	84	15	16
13.	Adopted children can bring joy to their adopted parents	91	95	5	5
14.	Most adopted children bring sadness to their adopted parents	24	25	72	75
15.	Child adoption is a necessity to childless couples.	62	65	34	35

The table three above shows 84(87%) indicated that adopted children can stabilize a marriage. Whereas 12 (13%) claimed that adopted children cannot stabilize a marriage 81(84%) indicated that adopted children can actually behave like biological children, yet 15 (16%) claimed that adopted children cannot behaved like biological children. Also 91 (95%) indicated that adopted children can bring joy to their adopted parents. While 5(5%) claimed that adopted children cannot bring joy to their adopted parents. 24(25%) indicated that most adopted children bring sadness to their adopted parents whereas 72 (75%) claimed that adopted children do not bring sadness to their adopted parent. Also 62(65%) indicated that child adoption is a necessity to childless couples yet 34 (35%) claimed that child adoption is not a necessity for childless couples.

### Research Question 4: Does resources spent on adopted child a wasted resources?

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED	%	DISAGREED	%
16.	Adopted children should be cared for like biological children	71	75	25	25
17.	Time and effort spent on adopted children is wasted	8	8	88	92
18.	Adopted children can be treated anyhow	13	13	83	87
19.	The needs of adopted children should not be like that of biological children	61	64	35	36
20.	Most adopted children result to disappointment	42	44	54	56

The data on table four shows that 71(75%) indicated that adopted children should be care for like biological children, while 25 (25%) claimed that adopted children should not be care for like biological children. Also 8(8%) indicated that time and effort spent on adopted children is wasted while 88(92%) claimed that the time and energy spent is not wasted 13 (13%) indicated that adopted children can be treated anyhow, while 83(87%) claimed that adopted children should not be treated anyhow. Also 61 (64%) indicated that the needs of adopted children should be met like that of biological children, yet 35 (36%), claimed that the needs of adopted children should not be met like biological children. Also 42 (44%) indicated that most adopted children result to disappointment to their adopted parents while 54 (56%) claimed that most of adopted children do not result to disappointment to their adopted parent later in life.

## 4. Discussion of Findings

The result of analysis in table one revealed that there is awareness and acceptability of child adoption in the society.

The findings in table two shows that Adopted children should be cared for, but they should not have equal right to properties as biological children, this findings is not in line with Issa and Awoyemi that child adoption is an acceptance into a parents family of a child not born to the parent, yet the child has the parents name and the same legal rights as a child by birth.

The result of analysis in table three shows that child adoption is considered as necessity for adopted children and that adopted child stabilize marriage and bring joy to their adopted parents. This findings is further confirmed by (Chukwu, 2011) who remarked that one of the purpose of child adoption is that adopted child stabilize marriage. The result of analysis on table four shows that resources, spent on adopted children is not wasted they should be care for, but that the money spent on them should not be the same as that of biological children.

## 5. Conclusion

It has been revealed from the findings that there is awareness and acceptability of child adoption in the society. It has also been revealed that adopted child should be cared for but should not have equal right to properties as biological child. It was concluded that adopted child is a necessity for childless couples and that resources spent on adopted child is not wasted.

## 6. Recommendation

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Pregnancy that are not planned for especially from teenager should not be aborted, there is a provision where such child can be cared for and those that dump babies in dust bin or along roadside because they are unable to care for such child should stop such bad attitude.
2. Childless couples should be free to adopt child or children.
3. Adopted children should be properly cared for, just as biological children.

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